edible oils has been reduced from 25% to 15%. Export of onion and pulses have been banned. All the State Government have been requested to take stringent action against hoarders and black marketeers under the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act. The supplies of essential commodities and their prices are being monitored on daily basis.

(c) The Government had convened a meeting of the Chief Ministers to discuss issues relating to price rise on 27.11.98. In the meeting several short-term and medium-term measures to contain and stabilise the prices of essential commodities were taken.

Disease Surveillance Programmes

*88.SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Nation-wide disease surveillance programmes which were proposed to be started, have been stopped;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor, if not, by when these would be started; and

(c) the number of centres to be opened in the North-Eastern States and in which medical institutes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) and (b) A pilot programme for undertaking disease surveillance and rapid response to disease outbreaks was introduced in 1997 and has been continued in 1998. Till now 25 districts have been covered and during the IXth Plan the programme is to be extended in a phased manner. The project essentially builds district capacity to recognise early warning signals of disease outbreaks and to tackle them promptly.

(c) There is a proposal to include 14 districts in the North-Eastern States under the Programme during the IXth Plan. The names of the districts and medical institutes are yet to be finalised.

Crime against Women

*89. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Commission for Women has proved to be a toothless organisation, having largely failed in its objective of focussing on and resolving the problems faced by the womenfolk in the present-day male-dominated society, securing status and human dignity to women and girls; curbing crime against women and bringing the culprits to book, followed by deterrent punishment;

(b) if so, to what extent; and

(c) what specific recommendations for amending or enacting women-related legislations are pending response and decision by Government or/are pending before Parliament and the State Legislatures?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. The National Commission for Women has been performing its functions in accordance with the mandate contained in the National Commission for Women Act, 1990.

(c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

S. No.	Name of Legislation
	Amendment of existing legislations:—
1.	Dowry prohibition Act, 1961
2.	The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987
3.	The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986.
4.	The Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, 1986.
5.	Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929.
6.	Hindu Marriage Act, 1955
7.	Guardians and Wards Act, 1890
8.	Indian Succesion Act, 1925.